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THE
ASSOCIATION:
BEING AN
ADDRESS
TO THE
MEMBERS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

S H E W I N G

How much it is their Duty, and how much they might render themselves superior to all PARTIES and SECTS amongst them, if they would give each other their mutual Assistance and Encouragement, as the *Dissenters* do to those of their Persuasion.

Mark those that cause divisions, and avoid them.
————— *Fas est & ab hoste doceri.*

L O N D O N:

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ASSOCIATION

MEMBERS

ADDED

TO

THE

LIST

OF

MEMBERS

OF THE

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THE ASSOCIATION.



IT must needs fall under every Man's observation, with what Zeal and Industry our *Dis-senters* pursue the Interest of their *respective Sects*; and of the Body of them in general, whenever their united Interests come in competition with that of the *establiſh'd Church*; and how they attempt to engross the Trade of the Nation to themselves. There is not that *Quaker, Presbyterian, Anabaptist, or Independant*, who will lay out a Shilling with one of our *Communion*, unless drove

to it by mere Necessity ; whilst we of the *establiſh'd Church*, regardless of her Interest in this most material Point, deal promiscuously with the *Seſtaries*, and those of our *own Way*: And if ever we chance to make a Distinction, it is generally in favour of the *Dissenters*. We chiefly lay out our Money among *them*, we take all Opportunities to recommend them, and give them all the Encouragement we can, and cry them up for greater and fairer Dealers than our own People: when, if ever this happens to be the case, it is because we discourage those of our own Communion, and reduce them to a starving Condition by not laying out our Money with them. But we cannot make even this Pretence for dealing with *Dissenters* in *London*, because there are as great and fair Traders, and as considerable Merchants to be found in the Communion of the *Church of England*, as among any of our *Seſtaries*; and possibly greater numbers of them, than among all our *Schismaticks* put together.

But the *Dissenters* are ever endeavouring to inculcate in us a Precept, which they themselves are Strangers to, *viz. that we should do good unto all men*, not remembering

membring what is subjoined, *But especially to those of the household of Faith.* And would these be deem'd of our Household, who refuse to enter the House of God, or *communicate* with us? And in those of our *Communion*, who pretend to this extensive Charity, are there no marks of Partiality to be discovered? Do they extend their Charity equally to *Papists* and *Dissenters*? If we are to do good equally to all, these too may claim a share in our Bounty; and if we were to be govern'd by the Merits of *either*, these perhaps might make the most considerable Pretensions to our favour, because they are a *true*, though *corrupted Church*, which cannot be said of any of the *Dissenters*. And there have been times when *Dissenters* themselves could make their court to *Roman Catholicks* to serve a turn; witness their Addresses to the unfortunate King *James*, when they wish'd for Windows in their Breasts, that it might appear how heartily they concurr'd in establishing a dispensing Power.—When the Church of *England* is to be distressed, will they not join with her Enemies of any sort? And as much as these Saints have endeavour'd to calumniate and asperse King *Charles* for making use of his
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Roman Catholick Subjects to defend himself against their monstrous Rebellion ; when they have any advantagious Views, then Roman Catholick Forces, Roman Catholick Alliances are sanctify'd by the Cause. But to return to this specious Pretence of *doing good unto all men promiscuously*, which the before-mention'd place of Scripture is made to favour, when it is for their turn ; I would ask them if they have consider'd it, and are very well assur'd that we shall do them good, by laying out our Substance among them : for if after all it should be found that we are doing Mischief not only to our own People, but to those very Schismatics we are so tender of : If this should fall out to be the case, then I hope, we have discovered an irrefragable Argument why we should no longer indulge that fond humour.

If Men are apt to be swayed by temporal Motives ; if God himself makes use of such, as we are assur'd he does ; if he is pleased to promise the good things of this Life, as well as those of a better to engage our Obedience, may we not imitate the great Example, and endeavour in like manner to promote his Honour, by administering of our Substance to his faithful Servants,

vants, and discountenancing those who are obstinate in their Errors? Very hard is the fortune of a Tradesman of our Communion, when a neighbouring Dissenter shall not only engross the Business of his own *Clan*, but have at least an equal share among those of the Establishment! Is he not in a likely way to thrive? And how should we resent such usage, if this should happen to be our own Case; though almost every one of us are sometimes guilty of such Management, and then would gladly have it imputed to want of Thought only? Surely this is not to *mark* and distinguish *those, who cause Divisions*, which we ought to do, not only for the sake of our own Members, but also for the sake even of the Schismatics themselves, that being discountenanced and discouraged in their Schism, they may begin to think of returning to their Duty: For never can we expect they should return, while we continue to heap Wealth and Honour upon them. This may probably induce those of our own Communion to go over to them, and increase the Schism, when they observe such Advantages on that side; but before we make one Profelyte by such practice, the Order of all things must be inverted, and

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Men must grow fond of *Poverty* and *Rags*.

Still, methinks, I hear it repeated, that we must do good unto all Men. And this is very true, if we take the Precept in a limited Sense. If I see an Infidel in Distress, I ought to assist him; but where a *Christian* and an *Heathen* are Candidates for my favour, to which shall I incline? When the Interest of the best Church upon Earth, and that of a stubborn Sect combin'd to ruin her come in competition, shall I hesitate one Moment, before I determine what to do; especially when I know what I give to *Dissenter* does but confirm him in his Error, and contribute to his everlasting Ruin? For will not these Men be apt to think their Schism harmless at least, when they find themselves caress'd by us, and some of them possibly may be induced to believe we secretly approve it; what else can they think is the reason we are so partial to them? And can we really distinguish those who would ruin us, no better than by lending them our Assistance to do it withal? Is it thus the Apostle intended we should distinguish them? Or do we better expound the other part of the Precept, *viz. to avoid them*, when we deal and converse more with them, than

we do with our Brethren ? Such Interpretations even *B——r* and his *Jesuit* would be troubled to give a colour to. Can it be thought strange that our Dissenters should daily increase in Wealth and Numbers, when they are thus supported and encouraged in their Schism on all hands, not only by this or that *Whig-Patriot*, or lukewarm Layman, but by too too many of our *Bishops* and *Clergy* ; some *designedly*, others by a Carelessness and Indifference as to the Persons they deal with, never considering the good or hurt they are capable of doing in the Disposal of their temporal Concerns ? 'Tis true they often applaud the Excellency of our Constitution : They tell us it is the most *Primitive*, the most *Apostolick*, the most reasonable Institution in the World. But can these Gentlemen be thought to be in earnest, while they discourage the Members of that *happy Establishment*, and not only set those of another Persuasion upon the level, but in numerous Instances give them the Preference ?

What avails it to inveigh against Schismatics in the Pulpit, if they deal with and encourage none else when they are out of it ? Just, very just was that Maxim of our Saviour's, *That a Tree is known by its*

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Fruits; nor will a wise Man, much less the All-wise God regard our good Words, unless attended with good Works. He will be honour'd, not only with our Lips, but in a pious and prudent Distribution of our Substance. Some there are, who to excuse, or rather, to justifie this promiscuous Distribution of their Favours, tell us, that their Charity is more extensive than their Neighbours; and that since there are honest Men of all Persuasions, they see no reason for any distinction. But have we not abundance of reason to believe, that those who seem so very indifferent to those of their own Communion, will certainly desert us whenever Honours and Preferments are to be found on the other side? Nor would I have them run away with an Opinion, that our Notions are at all more rigid or confin'd than theirs. We believe with St. *Paul*, that those who are Strangers to the Gospel, will be rewarded and punished by other Rules: That the number of Stripes will be proportion'd to the Prejudice and Ignorance of the Delinquent, where such Ignorance is not wilful and affected. But are we therefore to prefer a moral Heathen, Heretick, or Schismatick, who excludes himself from the Communion of our Church, and refuses to

submit to the terms of the Gospel, to one, who continues within her *Pale*, and conforms himself in all things to her Doctrine and Discipline.

But it is farther insinuated as an Argument to trade with them, that the *Quakers*, &c. are really fairer Dealers than those of our own Communion. And if they really believe that the Religion of the *Quakers* inspires them with better Principles, I have not one word to say; only I shall exhort them without delay to join their Brethren. But, I believe, every Man's own Experience that has dealt with both, will convince him that the Dissenter has excelled in nothing, but a formal Behaviour, accompany'd with abundance of hypocritical Professions of service and obsequious Cringes, which only take with those, whose Vanity is predominant; but are nauseous and surfeiting to every understanding, honest Man.

But were there some little Advantage to be made by dealing with a Dissenter, which doth not so often happen to be the case, as we imagine: If there was one grain of publick Spirit left among us, should we not rather encourage a Brother of our own Communion, than one who if he acts upon *Prin-*
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ciple,

ciple, must lay hold of every Opportunity to effect our Ruin? Can any one doubt if it were in the Dissenters Power again, but that they would extirpate EPISCOPACY *Root and Branch*, abolish the *Test*, and introduce the *Solemn League and Covenant* in it's room? And shall we ever remain such egregious Fools and Asses as to lend them our Assistance to destroy us; as those Gentlemen infallibly do, who contribute to enrich and strengthen their *Party*, by laying out their Money amongst them? And the effect is much the same, whether it happens to be done through the Design or Negligence of the Manager.

Would the Sons of the Church of *England* but give themselves leave to think how considerably they might advance her Interest by a prudent Management of their Fortunes: we should then need no additional Laws to support her, nor fear the disanulling of any; for if all have not great sums to dispose of in Charity, yet all must have *Necessaries*, and in purchasing these, that noble Purpose might be very much advanc'd, without injuring our selves. And indeed it is the greatest Charity to support a Brother in an honest Calling, much greater than to maintain him idly, if that was in our power.

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Besides, can we give a more satisfactory Account of our Stewardship to him from whom we receive all things, than this ; that in the negotiating our respective Talents, we have had a constant regard to his Glory, and endeavour'd to support and encourage the Members of that Communion, where we believed him to be worshipped in a manner most suitable to his divine Perfections, and the Revelation he has made of himself in the Holy Scriptures ?

With how ill a grace do some discarded Gentlemen complain that they are overlook'd, discouraged, and neglected by their Friends in Power, when those very Gentlemen are no less negligent of their Friends, who are in a sphere beneath them ! They distribute their Favours and their Money promiscuously among their neighbouring Tradesmen, without considering whether *Churchmen* or *Dissenters*, and do not reflect on their Mismanagement, even while they are Sufferers by the like Practice. Thus, if ever this Church be made a Prey to her Enemies, her Ruin will be effected by her own Children ; by such who pretend at least to be of her Communion ; she cannot be destroyed by other hands.

How few were the *profess'd Dissenters* in the Parliament of *Forty One*, and yet they were the Men that voted the Bishops out of the *Legislature*, and even condemn'd and executed an Archbishop for his steady Adherence to the established Church, and soon after establish'd *Fanaticism* by a Law?

Had not many of that *sanctify'd Assembly of Divines*, as they then call'd themselves, been benefic'd Clergy of the Church of *England*, and some of them taken the principal Degrees in the *Universities*? And yet these were the Men who not only abolished our *Liturgy*, but voted the *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and *Ten Commandments* out of doors. And when we observe Men of the same Principles, under the Mask of Churchmen promoting the same Design, shall we again be deluded by them, and afford them any Countenance or Encouragement? However it may suit with the Simplicity of the Dove, here is very little of the Wisdom of the Serpent. Our Ancestors might be amused with their Pretences to greater Sanctity; but shall we who have seen the dismal effects of such Pretences, foolishly give into them? This is not Charity, but downright Stupidity, and of
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most pernicious consequence to the Establishment.

If we are wise then, let us learn of our Enemies; let us encourage our Friends, and discard that lukewarm, careless Temper, which only can undo us. How glorious a Body would the Church of *England* appear, if her Members were unanimous! How would our Sectaries dwindle into nothing, if they had no Encouragement from our selves! *Interest* is their *Diana*, and could they find their Account in coming over to us, our Churches would soon be filled with Profelytes from *thence*. But while we are amus'd with these stale Pretences to more Honesty and plain Dealing than their Neighbours, and so are induced to lay out our Money among them, do they not observe our Weakness, and hold fast their Errors which bring in such Gain? Is not this an effectual way to confirm them in their Schism, and compel those of our own Communion to turn Dissenters for their Bread?

But a pretended Zeal for the King has of late been thought so meritorious with some, that it serves to justify not only the preferring of Dissenters, but even *profess'd Deists* and *Atheists* to those of our own Communion: Though how a Man should

should be furnish'd with Principles of *Loyalty*, who is an Apostate to *Christianity*, is difficult to imagine. For what has such an one to influence him but his Interest; and his Loyalty must veer with that, if he is really that Infidel he pretends to be?

How the Dissenters come to make such Pretences to LOYALTY at present, whose Principles are diametrically opposite to MONARCHY, is no great Mystery. They hope by this means to wriggle themselves into Power, and if ever they effect it, they will soon render the King as *glorious* as they did his *Predecessor* THE MARTYR; and will not fail to reform our Religion, as did their Forefathers, who left no Footsteps of our Establishment either in Church or State, no traces of our Constitution to be discovered within the three Kingdoms.

And are not these Considerations sufficient to awaken us? Is it not time to think of associating our selves, in order to strengthen our excellent Establishment, when our Enemies combine together, and use every Artifice to undermine, divide and ruin us? Let their indefatigable Industry excite our Diligence; and let us not for shame any more make use of that poor Pretence of
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greater Convenience. Can this (if true) balance that train of Mischiefs consequent on the Practice of supporting the Dissenters with our Money : And which if laid out with our own People, we should soon find it as convenient to deal with them ? They would thereby be enabled to use us better, and the Dissenters must infallibly shut up, or come over to us ; for had they no other gains than what they make among themselves, they would quickly be reduced to their primitive Plainness, and might be able to give a better reason for that Modesty of Dress they would be thought to aim at, than the gratifying a perverse Humour.

Riches and Power are seldom separated long. And if we permit the Dissenters to engross the Wealth of the Nation, it will not be a great while before they are Masters of every thing else. And if that for our Sins should so fall out, do you expect to meet with the same Indulgence from them ? They who now seem to have forgot the Nature of Schism, will then admit of no Dissenters from their *Communion* ; nor will they contribute to the Damnation of the most moderate Man amongst you, by doing him one single Act of Kindness. This you would then be told was the

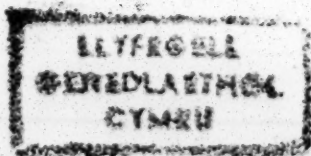
height of Frenzy, to encourage an Enemy to their Communion while he continued such; witness *Baxter's* long Tracts of Schism published in the Days of *Cromwell*; witness the Behaviour of a neighbouring *Kirk*, whom late Acts of Parliament can scarce restrain from doing Violence to the Members of our Communion. And would Presbytery in the *South* be more moderate than we find it in the *North*? If they shew their Resentments now, while we that are the more powerful Nation, have another Establishment, what would they do if in both Nations *Presbytery* prevail'd? But surely it is needless to spend more time in these Reflections; we are all sensible how much it is our Duty, how much our Interest to deal with our Brethren, *to mark those that cause Divisions and avoid them.* We are satisfy'd if this Direction were pursued in our several *Counties* and *Corporations*, it would give a greater Blow to Schism than all the Writings of our greatest Men; and our Heros need no more spend their Fortunes to obtain an Opportunity of serving their Countrey. But notwithstanding this is the daily subject of our Conversation, and we so severely condemn the contrary Practice in others; where is the

the Man, who in this particular regulates his Conduct by his Judgment? Come, for once let us appear unanimous, nothing but this is wanting to render our Constitution glorious and impregnable. Observe the Dissenters, and see how careful each Sect is to keep up the Power and Credit of their respective Parties. You have very few among them troubling your Parishes for Relief, but they are maintained by their own Body, which is a great Encouragement to many indigent and weak People to turn Schismatics, and join their Communion; and all this while the Church suffers in the loss of her Members, and in the growth of Fanaticism, for want of a more generous and publick Spirit to give the same Encouragement to those of her own Communion, as the Dissenters to *theirs*. For shame! let us not arm our Enemies against us after this manner. Let us not put it into the power of every *dissenting Buffoon*, every *Atheist* and *Deist*, *Socinian* and *Free-thinker* to wound us with our own Weapons, and beggar us with our own Money. Don't we see daily what use they make of their Increase of Trade? How they thereupon increase the number of their Conventicles, and enlarge their Nurseries of *False Doctrine*,

trine, Heresy and Schism. In this great and populous City you shall find two *Meeting-Houses* in one Parish, when two Parishes (*Prob Dolor!*) shall have but ONE CHURCH. Nay (if I am rightly inform'd) in one Parish within the Bills of Mortality there are forty odd Conventicles. And shall we still go on to enrich these People by trading with them, when they employ their Riches to such abominable, such execrable Purposes? Where is our Zeal for the House of the Lord? Where is our Love for his Church, when we not only suffer so many *Suckers* (as are the several Sectaries) to grow up to the impoverishing and starving the *Natural Grass*, but even *plant* them and *water* them our selves? Look we back into the first Ages of Christianity, and we shall see what little Dealings Christians then had with Hereticks. *Irenæus* tells us, that *John, a Disciple of the Lord* going into the Bath at Ephesus, and spying there Cerinthus, leap'd out of the Bath without washing himself, saying, let us fly, lest the Bath, having in it Cerinthus, an Enemy to the Truth, should fall on us. And when Marcion met Polycarp, and ask'd him whether he knew him, Polycarp answer'd, yes, I know thee to be the first-born

born of Satan. Nay, the same Author assures us, *that the Apostles and their Disciples had such a dread upon them, that they would not so much as hold a Discourse with any that had adulterated the Truth.* Should one shew the same Christian Shiness and Aversion to Hereticks now, we should have some Puritanical Saint or other cry, *Where is your Charity?* I should think without any more ado, that the Example of St. John, and of all the first Christians, might silence this stale Objection. But it seems St. John, nor no body else, shall be of any Authority with them, when it doth not suit with their Interest: Though at the same time that they are making this Objection, they are condemning *that* in others, which they are most guilty of themselves. For who are more like the *proud Pharisee* in the Gospel than they, who think themselves holier than the rest of their Neighbours; and therefore with *him* stand aloof, and will not vouchsafe to converse with those (of the Communion of the Church of *England*) whom they look upon to be SINNERS? And indeed the Objection turns all upon their own Heads; and we may justly put the Question to *them, Where is your Charity?* While we
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in avoiding *them*, and refusing to deal with *them*, cannot be charged with a Breach of that *great Duty*. For *Charity*, unless it have it's proper Object, and be rightly circumstantiated, loses it's quality. Besides, *Error* and *Heresy* are incapable of receiving it, because they destroy that capacity of future and immortal Happiness, with which every Man is endowed; from whence arises the Right which each hath to another's *Charity*. Let us not therefore by any such Pharisaical Cants be led to misplace our Charity, and so ruin our selves and *our Constitution*: but in the Distribution of it let us have a special Regard *to those of the Household of Faith*, and encourage them by all Opportunities of Trade; which if we are careful to do, and *avoid those that cause Divisions*, even in our ordinary Dealings, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts which are made to overthrow our Church, she will be Proof against the shocks of *Schism*, and the Insults of *Hereticks*.



F I N I S.

